

MOUNT SALVATION CEMETERY HISTORIC DISTRICT

1961 NORTH CULPEPER STREET
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22207

HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES
SEPTEMBER 2020



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Design Guidelines for a Certificate of Appropriateness and an Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness for the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery at 1961 North Culpeper Street, an Arlington County Local Historic District

I. Purpose and Intent of the Design Guidelines

These design guidelines are intended to assist the current and future property owners, Arlington County Historic Preservation Program (HPP) staff, and members of the Arlington County Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB) in the preservation and protection of the historic character and physical integrity of the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery Local Historic District (LHD). The guidelines reflect the preservation principles and recommendations of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, which includes the *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* represent best practices for historic preservation and are an important reference for interpreting and implementing the guidelines.

These design guidelines recognize that landscapes are not static but continue to evolve over time. They are not intended to prohibit changes, but rather to preserve the most important physical aspects of the historic district and ensure that any changes are respectful of and compatible with the historic and existing fabric and character of the LHD. In addition to appropriateness and compatibility, other factors to consider as part of the design review process include durability, design integrity, and overall harmony of the proposed modifications.¹

II. Physical Description of the Mount Salvation Cemetery Historic District

Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery is one of two church-affiliated, historic African American burial grounds in the Hall's Hill/High View Park neighborhood. It has been maintained continuously by the trustees of the affiliated church, Mount Salvation Baptist, since the congregation built its first church building on the property in 1892. The cemetery contains more than 85 burials ranging in dates from 1916 to 1974 (although it is likely burials began shortly after the congregation purchased the property in the late-19th century). There are two other historic African American cemeteries in Arlington County that are designated as local historic districts: Lomax African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Cemetery in Green Valley and Calloway United Methodist Cemetery in Hall's Hill. Mount Salvation would become the first Baptist cemetery to be locally designated and it is the final resting place of many influential Arlingtonians, including Lucretia M. Lewis, Moses Pelham, and Annie and Robert Spriggs.

Historic cemeteries are important cultural, architectural, and archaeological resources since they provide information relating to a community's past. Preservation of local cemeteries is not only important for the respect and commemoration of the interred, but for the invaluable educational opportunities that

¹ Portions of these design guidelines are adapted from the design guidelines for the nearby Calloway Cemetery Local Historic District. Arlington County Historic Preservation Program, "Calloway Cemetery Historic District Design Guidelines," November 2011.

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cemeteries provide in terms of genealogy and local history. Historic cemeteries reveal the lives and struggles of past generations who played an instrumental role in the church and community's history. Headstones provide a vast array of information including the names and dates of individuals, religious beliefs, service in the military, and memberships in local organizations. In addition, headstones reflect local and national trends in terms of marker material, motifs, and iconography.

Historic cemeteries have deteriorated for many reasons. Continued exposure to the elements and weathering impacts materials over time. In urban areas, pollution and acid rain have turned stones black and gray. Biological degradation in forms of algae and lichen have scarred stones. Improper cleaning methods have further quickened the deterioration of stones. Modern technology, especially lawn mowers and weed-whackers, have permanently scratched stones. The following design guidelines are a combination of "preservation" standards to protect the historical integrity of the cemetery and "conservation" standards to illustrate the appropriate way to repair damaged headstones.

Overall site: Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery is situated at the rear of the Mount Salvation Baptist Church building, which fronts North Culpeper Street, and covers most of the northeast half of the property.² The entire Mount Salvation Baptist Church parcel is 42,000 square feet (about 0.96 acres) and the cemetery is 17,284 square feet (about 0.39 acres) in area. The western two-thirds of the cemetery is relatively flat, but its eastern third slopes steeply towards the northeastern property boundary. The cemetery does not have any street frontage and is bordered by two single-family residences to the northwest, one single-family residence to the southeast, and a multi-family development that fronts North Buchanan Court to the northeast. The church building flanked by two asphalt topped parking lots establishes the cemetery's northwest boundary.

Significant Features: The most significant feature of the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery is its assortment of grave markers of varying type, material, age, and ornamentation. The eight high value trees identified by the County's Urban Forester are also character defining features of this site (Attachment C). The priority for preservation of the site will involve maintaining the historic and physical integrity of the individual headstones, the high value trees, and the overall site, as well as clearly defining the boundaries of the cemetery.

III. Requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) and an Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness (ACoA)³

Citizens accept a stewardship responsibility when owning property within one of Arlington's LHDs. As stewards of such important historic resources, owners also share a responsibility for helping maintain the distinctive qualities that define these historic districts.

² The extant church building, designed by notable Washington, D.C. firm Bryant and Bryant, is excluded from the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery LHD boundary.

³ Note that not all the site elements provided for in this section (e.g. driveway, paving, etc.) are currently present within the local historic district boundary. These guidelines provide direction for how proposed improvements will be reviewed whether they are part of existing conditions or not. The inclusion of site elements within this section does not imply that the elements would be appropriate within the boundaries of the local historic district; it simply indicates the necessary parameters by which the HALRB will determine a proposed element's appropriateness.

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A CoA is required for all proposed exterior alterations, new construction, and demolition within an LHD, except for repainting, routine maintenance, or repairs in kind. The CoA process involves two separate, though related, meetings that are open to the public. Both these meetings occur monthly to allow the applications to be reviewed and decided upon in a timely manner.⁴

There are twelve (12) standard guidelines covering the type of work that will require a CoA from the HALRB and one (1) standard guideline that will require an ACoA from the staff of the HALRB.

A. A CoA is required for the following changes to the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery Local Historic District:

- 1) If the proposed work involves different materials and/or a different design than presently existing materials.
- 2) The removal or modification of all or part of any significant features.
- 3) Any site plan alterations including enlargement, addition, or modification of cemetery boundaries.
 - a. Alterations are encouraged to be obscured from the public right-of-way along North Culpeper Street.
- 4) The installation, removal, or changes in material of specific landscape elements, including lighting, fencing, retaining or decorative walls, driveway, walkways, or paving.
- 5) The installation of utility systems (sprinklers, etc.).
- 6) The installation, removal, or modification of signage (including historic markers).
- 7) The installation, removal, relocation, or modification of headstones, grave markers, or other funerary objects.
- 8) The painting of previously unpainted materials.
- 9) Ground disturbing activities beyond routine landscape maintenance as described in *Section IV.2* of these design guidelines.
- 10) The removal of **any tree(s) (healthy, damaged, or diseased)** (measuring at least 15 inches in diameter at 4 feet of height). Removal of damaged or diseased trees will require the submittal of a written report by the County's Urban Forester that details the hazardous or unhealthy condition of the tree and includes specific recommendations for the species and location of any replacement tree(s).⁵
- 11) The future construction or exterior alteration of any buildings (including outbuildings such as sheds) on the parcel. There are not currently any buildings within the LHD boundary. It is generally considered inappropriate to site any new buildings within the boundaries of the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery LHD. New buildings should be sited elsewhere on the Mount Salvation Baptist Church property in an area not included within the LHD overlay.

⁴ Please note that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the HALRB is only having one meeting each month and is reviewing CoAs during this single meeting.

⁵ If a tree is an imminent hazard to people and/or property, then it should be removed as soon as possible regardless of whether a CoA has been issued. In these cases, the church trustees should apply for a retroactive CoA after removal and provide photographs demonstrating the hazardous condition and an arborist's report if available.

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- 12) Any other action not considered ordinary maintenance, but which modifies, alters, or otherwise affects the landscape, site, or other features noted within the LHD.

B. An ACoA is required for the following changes to the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery Local Historic District:

- 1) Repair to existing headstones and/or grave markers. The HPP staff will advise on techniques and materials required for repair referencing the information from *Section VI: Cleaning and Repairing Damaged Headstones* of these design guidelines.

IV. Exemptions from the CoA/ACoA Process⁶

The following changes within the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery Local Historic District are exempt from the CoA and ACoA process and review:

- 1) The repair, replacement, and ordinary maintenance of exterior features with the same materials of the same design excluding headstone repair, which requires an ACoA per Section III.B.1 of this document.
- 2) General landscaping, preparation, and maintenance of lawns, trees, shrubbery, flower beds, and gardens.
- 3) Paving repair using like materials of like design.

V. How to Maintain a Historic Cemetery

Proper maintenance of an historic cemetery is key to the continued preservation of the site. A maintained cemetery welcomes visitation and will experience fewer problems with vandalism. This section addresses best practices for maintaining historic cemeteries pertaining to mowing, landscape elements, trees, and fencing. Now that initial documentation of the cemetery has been completed, the church trustees should enact a maintenance schedule that includes day-to-day, periodic, and long-term maintenance components.

Short Term vs. Long Term Goals

| SHORT TERM | LONG TERM |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Weeding | Site landscaping |
| Pruning | Erosion issues |
| Mowing | Replacement of trees and plants |
| Collection of trash | Installation of fencing ⁷ |

⁶ Note that not all the site elements provided for in this section (e.g. driveway, paving, etc.) are currently present within the local historic district boundary. These guidelines provide direction for how proposed improvements will be reviewed whether they are part of existing conditions or not. The inclusion of site elements within this section of the guidelines does not imply that the elements would be appropriate within the boundaries of the local historic district, it simply indicates the necessary process to determine a proposed element's appropriateness.

⁷ Further archaeological investigations should be conducted to ascertain the total extent and locations of burials prior to siting and installing any new fencing at the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery LHD.

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Mowing - Modern mowers allow for quick and easy maintenance but are one of the major causes of irreparable damage to historic cemeteries. The contractor/landscaper must understand that historic cemeteries require certain precautions. The following mowing guidelines will help preserve the site.

| ACCEPTABLE | NOT ACCEPTABLE |
|--|---|
| Use walk-behind mowers that are controllable and light. | No riding mowers should be used in the cemetery. The proximity of the stones to one another is too close for the large mowers. Also, the weight of mowers may leave ruts in the soil. |
| Grass should be cut by a mower up to and no closer than 12 inches from every marker. The remaining grass around the marker should be trimmed with hand tools. | Mower equipment should not make contact with stones. |
| All mowers should be equipped with rubber bumpers to protect the stones in case of accidental contact. All mowers also should use discharge guards to protect the headstones from possible projected debris. | Mowers not fitted with special protections. |
| Clippings should be raked and discarded off site. | Mower clippings left on site. |

Landscape - Many headstones, bedsteads, and other grave markers have been buried due to erosion of the soil, sinking of the headstones, lack of maintenance, and other forces. To best represent the cemetery's historic landscape and to respect the interred, those markers should be continually exposed. However, exposure of the markers will necessitate the grading of the land in order to make it a safe and maintainable space. The church trustees should consider consulting with a landscape architect to assess drainage issues that have led to the erosion of the site and covering of some of the historic markers. A landscape architect will be able to advise on the equally important matter of creating a management plan for the slope along the northeastern site boundary that is characterized by volunteer vegetation. Be aware that **any alterations** of the landscape (including grading) first will require a CoA from the HALRB to ensure that the proper precautions are undertaken, and the design is historically appropriate. See *Section III: Requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) and an Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness (ACoA)* for more information.

Trees - The County's Urban Forester identified eight high value trees within the LHD during a June 2016 survey that was verified and updated in August 2019. The County's Urban Forester will be available for consultations regarding trees at the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery as needed. High value trees are healthy trees that the Urban Forester recognized for their size, species, or other cultural interest. The HPP staff recommends that the eight high value trees identified by the forester should all be considered specimen or heritage trees. Therefore, extra care should be taken to preserve these important character defining features of the cemetery (See Attachment C for the complete Tree Survey and Report). The health of all trees at the cemetery should be considered when planning for their maintenance or removal and replacement, regardless of whether they were classified as high value trees in Attachment C. There are plantings near some of the grave markers, most are intentionally maintained as decoration, but some small trees appear to be volunteers and should be removed to protect the headstones from damage. The slope along the northeastern site boundary likewise is characterized by volunteer vegetation that should

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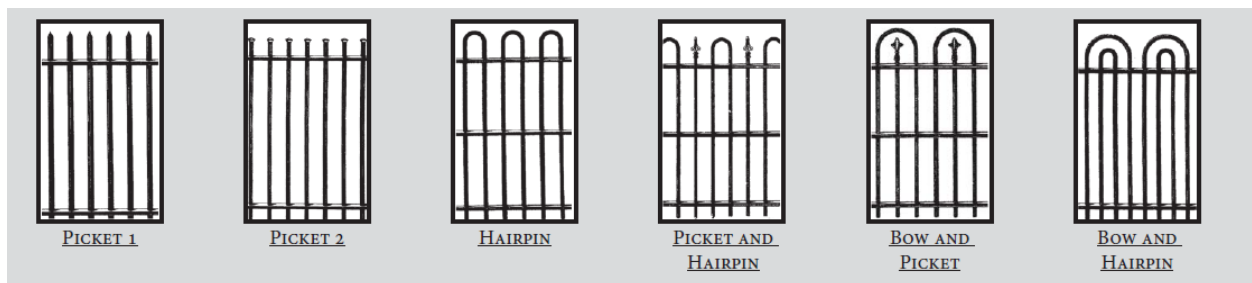
be removed and maintained as an open area to protect the headstones there and to allow for better pedestrian access.

Ideally, trees that are removed should be replaced with a tree of a similar species. However, due to the proximity of some of the headstones to the existing trees, replacement of all unhealthy trees will not be recommended by the HALRB. Note, the removal of **any tree** over 15 inches in diameter and 4 feet tall will require a CoA. The review board will ensure that all precautions are taken to prevent the planting of a species with long-term maintenance issues or that may harm the site and the headstones.

- Seek advice from the County’s Urban Forester regarding the health of the tree.
- Inspect trees regularly to ensure the root systems are not interfering with headstones.
- If removal of a tree in proximity to a headstone is necessary, cut it as close to the ground as possible. Allow the stump to naturally decay. Do not use chemicals.
- Replacement trees should not interfere with grave markers, fences, or other landscape features.
- Remove weeds and overgrowth like poison ivy regularly

Fencing - Mount Salvation Baptist Church may install a fence around the perimeter of the cemetery.⁸ While a fence may have never stood at Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery, a fence would be historically appropriate and promote the long-term maintenance of the site. A fence also would further delineate the space from the surrounding urban environment and deter vandalism. A CoA will be required from the HALRB prior to installing any fencing. The fence design should be simple in nature and not ornate, in keeping with the cemetery’s historic and existing appearance.

The most common cemetery fences were constructed from wrought and cast iron. The designs consisted of either two or three rails with various attached cast elements. The basic designs are picket, hairpin, picket and hairpin, bow and picket, and bow and hairpin. The fence types listed below (which are from the Stewart Iron Works Catalog as an example) would be historically appropriate for the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery. However, a metal chain link fence, wooden picket, or wooden vertical board fence would not be in keeping with the historic character of the site.



Metal Fence Types appropriate for the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery.

VI. Cleaning, Repairing, and/or Replacing Headstones

Headstones are damaged by the environment, natural decay, and people. The weathering of stone is a physical and chemical process that occurs slowly over time at different rates depending on the material.

⁸ HPP Staff strongly encourages church trustees to commission further archaeological investigations to ascertain the total extent of burials prior to siting and installing new fencing at the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery.

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For example, marble will erode at a faster rate than other cemetery stones since it consists of calcite and dolomite, which are more vulnerable to acid rain due to their high solubility. However, one must not confuse a stone’s natural patina (color) with pollutants. The goal of cleaning and repairing headstones is not to return a headstone to its original brightness, but to negate the potential damage that is being inflicted. In addition, the unadvised cleaning methods needed to return the stone to its original color will cause irreparable damage and remove the historic appearance of the marker.

In some limited instances, it may be appropriate to replace severely damaged or missing headstones in order to record the names of people who are known to be interred at the Mount Salvation Baptist Cemetery. However, it is generally advised not to install or replace multiple headstones due to the ground disturbance this would cause. Instead, the church trustees should consider erecting a single collective memorial marker with the names of confirmed burials without headstones rather than erecting multiple headstones for individuals as this will be less potentially damaging to the integrity of the historic cemetery.

Prior to undertaking an individual headstone replacement or installing a collective memorial marker, it is important that church trustees hire historic preservation professionals to conduct archaeological and archival investigations to determine the most appropriate location to site a new headstone that will not damage the integrity of the cemetery as a cultural and archaeological resource. Any new or replacement headstones must first be approved by the HALRB prior to installation. Any new or replacement markers should be similar in material, dimension, and design to existing historic headstones in the cemetery but should be clearly marked with the year of their installation so that they may be distinguished from original historic fabric.⁹

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| Damage is caused by the following factors: |
| 1. Aging of stone |
| 2. Weathering |
| 3. Lichen, algae, and other organic growths |
| 4. Carbon deposits (other Co2 emissions) |
| 5. Acid rain |
| 6. Neglect |
| 7. Improper maintenance |

Preparing for Cleaning the Grave Markers

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| Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rank headstones in order of dirtiest to cleanest. Keep a record, written and photographic, documenting the cleaning and repair of the marker (e.g., dirt, pollutants, algae, lichen, etc.). |
| Train | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleaning headstones is not an intuitive process. Make sure that all workers/volunteers have read the necessary literature/information. |
| Clean | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use only the procedures/tools listed in the following section. (The information is from <i>A Graveyard Preservation Primer</i> by Lynette Strangstad and <i>Grave Concerns: A Preservation Manual for Historic Cemeteries in Arkansas</i> by Tammie Trippe-Dillon). |

⁹ The headstones installed in 2020 and documented in the LHD report are an example of appropriate contemporary grave markers.

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Required Tools and Materials

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| Water | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The best option is a long hose since a large amount of water is needed to clean a headstone. However, the pressure should be low. The water is used only to wet the stone and not remove pollutants, biological growth, etc. |
| Protective Eyewear and Rubber Gloves | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cleaning agents may contain chemicals that are potentially harmful. |
| Spray Bottles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply water precisely. |
| Brushes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of sizes and stiffness will be necessary to clean the various types of headstones. The brushes should have natural or nylon handles. Do not use brushes that are very stiff/wiry as they will damage the stones. Also, do not use brushes with color handles as they may leave marks on the stones. |
| Wooden Craft Sticks (Tongue Depressors) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be used to clean out recesses on stone such as granite or slate. This tool may be harmful to softer stones such as marble or stones that have deteriorated. |
| Cotton Swabs and Toothbrushes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be used to clean out recesses/engravings on softer stones (rather than craft sticks). Note, use only soft bristle toothbrushes. |
| Non-Ionic Detergent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-ionic detergents are electrically neutral cleaning agents that do not contain or contribute to the formation of soluble salts. Successfully facilitates the removal of general soiling. Photo-Flo, Orvus, and Vulpex are the three most widely used detergents (use one ounce per five gallons of water). Available online at camera/photography and conservation supply stores. |

What to use when cleaning a headstone (apply in the order listed)

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| Marble, Slate, Concrete, Granite, and Similar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water. Water and a non-ionic detergent (such as Vulpes). Always use the weakest cleaning agent that successfully removes the pollutants from the headstone. The stronger the cleaning agent, the more it can negatively affect the headstone. |
| Lichen Removal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lichen should be pre-wetted. Carefully loosen and remove with a wooden craft stick. Repeat process as necessary. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lichen that is hardened to stone and not easily removed should be left for a professional conservator. Also, when lichen is removed a stain may be visible from the chemicals produced by the organic growth reacting with the stone. |
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Basic Rules and Procedures for Cleaning Headstones

1. Make sure to use the correct product or cleaning agent for the type of stone.
2. Try a test patch in an inconspicuous area first to see if there will be any unwanted effects before proceeding to clean the entire stone.
3. Use a large amount of water prior to cleaning and continually wet stone during cleaning.
4. Pre-wetting the stone will loosen dirt and stop excessive amounts of cleaning agents from penetrating the stone.
5. Always clean from the bottom of the stone to the top to prevent streaking and discoloration.
6. Be sure to wash off all cleaning solution.
7. Do not clean if stability is in question. Any grainy surface that readily falls away, such as concrete, should not be cleaned.
8. A headstone should only be cleaned as needed and, barring extenuating circumstances, not more than once a year.
9. Never use a power washer or sand blaster to clean headstones. This will cause irreparable damage.
10. Do not use cleaning solutions unless water and brushing is not sufficiently cleaning the headstone.
11. Chlorine bleach is never recommended.
12. Do not apply any sealants or protective coats. The markers act as a sponge absorbing any moisture given the direct contact with soil. If the stone is sealed, moisture will not be able to escape, which will drastically quicken the rate of deterioration.

Basic Rules and Procedures for Repairing Headstones

Before attempting any repairs, the reader should examine the suggested books/articles in *Section VIII: Further Reading* and consider attending a seminar on the repair of historic cemeteries. As always, if the repair is complex in nature, consult a conservation professional for further instruction or information prior to undertaking the work.

Six Rules for Repairing Headstones:

1. Repair material must not be more durable than the original material (i.e., do not use Portland cement which will potentially damage the stone).
2. Repair is reversible (new approaches may be developed).
3. Repair respects the original material.
4. Repair is historically accurate (i.e., uses appropriate mortar).
5. Repair does not inhibit natural permeability/breathability of the stone (beware of sealants).
6. Repair only should be conducted on sound stones.

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Common Headstone Repairs (increasing in difficulty):¹⁰

1. Correcting tilted tablet markers that were set directly into the ground.
2. Resetting fallen markers that were directly set into the ground.
3. Stabilizing and resetting a stone or a concrete base.*
4. Replacing a marker into a base.*
5. Constructing a concrete base for a tablet.*
6. Repairing a snapped/broken marker.*
7. Infilling missing stone fragments. *

VII. Glossary

Abrasion - The physical wearing of the surface of stone due to excessive friction or rubbing. In cemeteries, repeated headstone rubbings can lead to the loss of text and ornate engravings.

Biological Growth - Fungal, lichen, or other biological organisms that produce enzymes that may dissolve, stain, and degrade the stone if exposed to certain weather conditions.

Corrosion - The degradation of a metal material due to a chemical or electrolytic reaction. Rusting of iron alloys and patination of copper alloys are types of corrosion most often associated with cemeteries.

Delamination - Stone damage resulting from fractures or separations along bedding planes usually resulting in loss of material. One of the main causes is water infiltration between the stone laminae.

Discoloration/Staining - Stone surface discoloration caused by organic growths and/or pollution. Different stains have different causes and thus require different cleaning methods.

Displacement - A stone that has detached from its original position.

Efflorescence - Deposits of white salts in the pores of the stone that generally also present on the stone's surface. It may be caused by fertilizers, air or water pollution, Portland cement, or other cleaning compounds.

Erosion - A gradual wearing of a stone's surface resulting in rounded, blurred edges and damage to carved details. This is generally caused by natural abrasion due to wind and wind-blown particles or the disintegration of the stone's surface by acidic rainfall.

Freeze-Thaw Cycle - A cycle of repeated temperature changes that results in the freezing and thawing of water that has penetrated materials. This cycle can result in deterioration to porous materials such as stone.

¹⁰ Mount Salvation Baptist Church members/volunteers should not attempt the (*) repairs. Such items require further training or the presence of a professional conservator. The HPP staff will be able to advise on how to proceed with the (*) items.

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Grime - Surface dirt that may be visible due to a combination of pollutants.

Grout - A material (often cementitious) used to fill cracks and crevices in masonry and stone.

Gypsum Crust - An encrustation of gypsum ($\text{CaSO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$) on the surface of a stone caused by a chemical reaction between certain types of calcium-rich stone and water. Gypsum crust often can present as black due to its susceptibility to atmospheric staining. Removal of these crusts also may remove the surface layer of the stone.

In-Situ - The original location of a feature.

Porous - A material that contains many small, interconnected holes (pores) that generally allow water, air, or other small materials to pass through them.

Spalling/Scaling - The loss of flakes or fragments from the surface of a stone due to water infiltration, mechanical damage, or other mechanisms.

Sugaring - A granular, sometimes powdery, loss of a stone's surface that is characteristic of particularly fine-grained marbles and limestones indicating a gradual surface degradation.

VIII. Further Reading

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